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SELECTED ASPECTS OF ARMY OFFICERS' WIVES'
PERCEPTION OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING DURING
THEIR HUSBANDS' ABSENCE

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Worden School
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DEDICATION

Our research team wishes to dedicate this treatise to the participants in the study and to all women who have undergone the ordeal of a military separation from their husbands.

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I try to make the children understand the difficulties of our present situation, that they too must strive at getting along. It's very difficult for my children this year without their father. He always spent a great deal of quiet times with them, discussing whatever they wished to discuss. . . .

Anonymous

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT AND DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this descriptive study was to explore the functioning of Army officers' wives while their husbands were absent from the family on twelve-month unaccompanied tours of duty. The wives' "Perception of Adequacy of Functioning," (PAF) and their "Perception of Performance," (PERF) in four specific areas of familial functioning were studied during the third quarter of their husbands' one-year absence.

Studies of the family can be made from many different theoretical frames of reference. In view of this, an approach was conceptualized which was not unique, but tended to serve well the purpose of this particular study. This approach specified observation of four apposite spheres of family functioning, which were delineated, using questions related to PAF and PERF, respectively. These four spheres were: (1) Reaction to Crisis; (2) Financial Management; (3) Discipline; and (4) Family Relationships. Since inclusion of all the elements which conceivably could go into

a descriptive study of this type would be prohibitive, these ;
four areas of family responsibilities were chosen and agreed
upon by this research team after careful thought and con-
sideration. It was held that these specific areas were most
germane to the type of study undertaken because they are
intricately and constantly present in the functioning of
wives whose husbands are absent. A review of related liter-
ature also revealed that various social scientists are con-
cerned with, have experimented with, and conceptualized
these same family functions.

Due to the geographic mobility of this society,
separation is an "American phenomenon" that causes varying
degrees of stress and pressure, especially within military
families.¹ For instance, the United States is currently
involved in the Republic of Viet Nam, creating separation
crises that, seemingly, are in need of special attention.²
Social work deals with family functioning. Social workers
are constantly dealing with the practicalities of human
relationships. Knowledge of family functioning during the

¹See pp. 31-32.

²Ibid.

separation process is important to effective Army social work practice and by extension to the rest of social work. Additional significance of this study may be seen in its contribution to the available body of knowledge so that more beneficial insights may be gained regarding military wives' functioning in the absence of their husbands. Also, this research group was concerned with various social science concepts--family, role theory and assumption of new roles, reaction to and handling of stress, perception, family ideals, male/female functions, learning behavior, one-parent families, relocation in new places, and similar related concepts. This report was framed within the context of these concepts but primarily was operationalized at the level of social work practice and methodology. Ultimately, it is desired that the knowledge gained in this particular research endeavor will be of value to those on the faculty at the Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake College, as well as the military community and the social work profession as a whole.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Development of the two concepts, PAF and PERF, occasioned use of much material from the social and behavioral sciences. Therefore, a comprehensive and thorough review of this literature was undertaken. Of considerable relevance to this study was the "Walter Reed Studies" made from 1964-1966, concerning the Impact of Father Absence in Military Families.¹ Also of value was the 1966 research report by Dr. Harry C. Moore and his wife, Dr. Bernice Milburn Moore, concerning their work with the problems of families in the Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. A 1968 report on Family Roles in Isolation

¹ Stewart L. Baker, et al., Impact of Father Absence in Military Families (Washington, D. C.: Walter Reed General Hospital, March, 1968). Paper presented in sections at the 44th and 45th Annual Meetings of the American Orthopsychiatrists Association, Washington, D. C., March, 1967 and 1968.

Note: The Walter Reed Studies were composed of three distinct sections: I. The Military Family's Overall Adjustment; II. Factors Related to Coping with the Separation; and III. Problems of Reintegration.

and Separation² also proved of great value to this study.

In addition, role theory and perception theory of sociology and psychology, respectively, greatly contributed to the formation of the major assumptions of this study. Attempts to secure other unpublished material were unfortunately unsuccessful.

While reviewing the Walter Reed literature, Section I was found to be of particular importance. It dealt with an overview of the military family's adjustment in the absence of the father. Findings in this section which were of special interest included the following: Mothers were reported to have increased rather than decreased independency regarding their familial functioning. They were supported by feelings of the husband's approval of their management of the home.³

Measurable reactions to the father (husband) absence were experienced by both mothers and sons. While the majority of mothers reported that both they and their sons experienced initial unhappiness and some

²Chaplain Charles Brown, et al., Family Roles in Isolation and Separation. N. D. pamphlet.

³Baker, et al., p. 20.

deterioration of behavior, some stated reactions in the direction of personal growth.⁴

Inferentially, this suggests that reaction to absence was (1) measurable, (2) negative in the majority of cases "initially," with (3) some positive change. It was further indicated that emotional tensions of various mothers were sometimes manifested through the misbehavior of their children.⁵ Mothers who lived within familiar surroundings or with relatives tended to experience less distress. These findings were supported especially by Tiller⁶ and Gronseth⁷ in their studies of father absence and personality development in Norwegian sailor families. Also supporting the findings were studies by Peterson concerning the son's adjustment as perceived by the mother,⁸ and Murphy and

⁴Ibid., p. 21.

⁵Ibid., pp. 21-22.

⁶P. O. Tiller, "Father Absence and Personality Development in Sailor Families," Nordisk Psykologi's Monograph, Series No. 9, 1958.

⁷E. Gronseth, "The Impact of Father Absence in Sailor Families Upon the Personality Structure and Social Adjustment of Adult Sailor Sons," Nordisk Psykologi's Monograph, Series No. 9, 1958.

⁸Donald B. Peterson, "Behavior Problems of Middle Childhood," Journal of Consulting Psychology, XXV (1961), 205-209.

Zoobuck's work concerning fifty cases of children with school adjustment problems.⁹

In addition to having studied the "Walter Reed Literature," a comprehensive review was made of the 1966 report by the Moores concerning their work with the special problems of Air Force families in the Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. Their mission was directed toward

giving officers and men a better understanding of the social-psychological impact of separation upon families; the crises aspects of isolated combat and other assignments; and the problems of family relocation during an absence of the husband and father. Particular emphasis was placed upon the effects of situations on the morale and efficiency of men in combat areas and upon morale and efficiency of their wives as temporary heads of the household.¹⁰

Four major areas of concern to the wives in the Tactical Air Command included their "reaction to the separation crisis,

⁹Elizabeth B. Murphy and G. A. Zoobuck, "School Adjustment Problems of Military Dependents as Seen in Fifty Cases Presented in the Child Guidance Clinic of Brooke Army Hospital" (unpublished Master's thesis, Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake College, 1951).

¹⁰Family Life Resource Guide, FY 1969, USAF Chaplain Program, USAF Chaplain Board, Air University, 1968, p. 55.

personal adjustment to the separation, relations with the children, and financial difficulties."¹¹ These areas are similar to and tend to support the four areas of family functioning chosen for this descriptive study. The Moores describe the first area of their study (reaction to the crisis) as progressing through three distinct phases. The initial reaction to the separation is one of

disbelief, inactivity, and stunned response. This first period is usually followed by intense activity, an effort to regain organization in one's life by sheer force of energy. Action by the wives seems to be undertaken merely for the sake of action. Volunteer work is grossly undertaken at this time, as well as mutual dependence of wives on one another in an attempt to mitigate suffering. It is quickly discovered that expenditure of energy alone cannot restore the husband to the home, so the third phase--a period of bitterness and recrimination--scapegoating--commonly emerges. For instance, attacks are made on the service as an organization; on the United States for its shortsighted policy; upon neighbors, friends--anyone available.¹²

A second problem area of concern to the wives in the Tactical Air Command Study was a vital one--their individual adjustment to the separation. The personal difficulty most

¹¹Ibid., pp. 59-61.

¹²Ibid., p. 60.

frequently mentioned was loneliness. It was most acute where no children, relatives, or friends were present, and was also expressed as a lack of adult companionship, even when there were children in the home. It was further stated that whenever it became necessary to change residence, the wives often found themselves without friends with whom they could converse freely, who could understand, and with whom letters from their husbands could be shared.¹³

The third area, relations to the children, was certainly of grave concern to the wives at Langley Air Force Base. "Problems of discipline without a father's authority were described as often overwhelming."¹⁴ There was a tendency to take out frustration by constantly speaking harshly with the children. The researchers described one mother as saying, "You find yourself yelling all the time, mainly because you have to take care of them all the time and you can't count on your husband to take over at night."¹⁵ The mothers' extraordinary concern for their children caused

¹³ Ibid., p. 65.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁵ Ibid.

some of them to "act up" to gain extra attention. Concurrently, it was felt that the mobility factor of the children might also be detrimental to them and their parents.¹⁶

A fourth problem area of importance mentioned by the wives in the Tactical Air Command Study was that of financial difficulty. "Excessive spending, in an effort to raise morale, was cited as a danger."¹⁷ Other financial worries mentioned included

the cost of maintaining a household with the husband away from home; the loss of extra pay from extra jobs held by some of the husbands; taking over management of the finances of the family; and sharing financial management via letters or other communication.¹⁸

Closely correlated to the four areas delineated by the Moores were those areas explored by four Air Force Chaplains in their 1968 report on Family Roles in Isolation and Separation. Briefly, the areas of interest included family relations, discipline, reaction to crisis, and psychological preparation to separation. In regard to family relations, the Chaplains stated that:

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 65.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 67.

Isolation and separation hinder establishment of settled family habits (roles) and interfere with intercommunication by which family unity is maintained and promoted. Shocks and strains are bound to occur when individual members of families as groups are literally uprooted from their customary surroundings and dispersed to the four corners of the nation and world. They have little or no sense of belonging to community groups, for they will be on their way again soon, and consequently many do not exert themselves to get established in the new community. Habits of nonfamily living develop in those separated and it is often extremely difficult for them to settle back into habits of family living.¹⁹

The Chaplains moved from the general area of family relations to the more specific area of discipline by explaining that, although the father who is separated attempts to contact and influence his children through letters, nonetheless it is difficult for him to continue his contribution to their personality development. His absence may mean the chief disciplinarian has been removed at a time when the mother and other adult members of the family are disturbed by and preoccupied with new problems. More problematic, a returning father may find it difficult to adjust to his children who have grown into strangers during his absence.²⁰

The Chaplains also described their findings on Air

¹⁹Brown, et al., p. 1.

²⁰Ibid.

Force families' reaction to crisis during separation. They found that if family members have a prolonged separation from one another, the family loses its primary significance for them. Communication patterns also change, becoming irregular and more formal. Time and attention are consumed by immediate pressing problems, with the resulting psychological withdrawal of the members from one another. The consequent tendency toward disruption was seen to be more likely because previous intercommunication was insufficient to provide the sharing of experiences and the common understanding of feelings, attitudes, and ideals essential to durable relationships.²¹ In summarizing the reaction to separation crisis in military families, the Chaplains stated that this situation "places great stress upon family relationships, accelerating family disorganization in some ways and reorganizing it in other respects."²²

The Chaplains delineated a fourth area of study, psychological preparation to separation. In this area there appear to be three primary situations that cause tension for families awaiting separation. They are:

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., p. 2.

(1) the tension and anxiety that occurs in the life of the husband; (2) the tension placed on the wife and finally; (3) the stress placed upon the children--particularly the teenager or adolescent whose adjustment is threatened because of not having a father with which to identify.²³

These three situations have psychological impact of measurable effect, since new social contexts, roles, and adjustment patterns must be adopted. It is these types of tensional situations, significant external motives, desires, and events leading to expectancy that have considerable bearing on the formation of the officers' wives' PAF.

Literature on role theory and perception theory also provided relevant information germane to this study. Some of the more significant role theories emphasize the effect of stress upon the individual family member and the consequent results upon the family unit.

Activity under stress that threatens the family depends in part upon the adequacy of the social roles played by its members. What an individual does as a family member largely depends on the expectations that other members place upon him; the family succeeds only so long as its members agree on these expectations and try to meet them. Stress causes change in these role patterns: expectations shift, and the family is forced

²³ Ibid., p. 4.

to work out different patterns. In the process the family is slowed up in its affectional and emotion-satisfying performances until new patterns are worked out and avenues for expressing affection are opened.²⁴

A great amount of emphasis seems to be placed on the individual's group role during stress in the aforementioned studies which also purported that,

Personality changes in members reflect the anxiety and feelings of insecurity engendered by the crisis, and in a sense each responsible member experiences personal shock, disorganization, recovery, and readjustment.²⁵

However, there are some personality theorists who believe that role behaviors which the individual is forced to enact within his group reflect a basic inviolate personality. One of these outstanding authorities holding this position is Gordon Allport.

. . . his convictions lead him to resist the current fashion in social science that would reduce personality to a matter of roles, to interpersonal relations, to incidents within the sociocultural system. . . . For Allport, then, the individual's behavior in the group is partly determined by a basic personality which is in a sense, beyond group control.²⁶

²⁴Donald A. Hansen, "Families Under Stress," in Handbook of Marriage and the Family, ed. by Harold Christensen (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1964), p. 806.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶David Krech, Richard S. Crutchfield, and Egerton L. Ballachey, The Individual in Society (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1962), p. 487.

The various phases of family stress with a subsequent readjustment have been studied quite intensively. A representative study of the consequences of stress follows:

Behavior over the period of stress varies from family to family. The common denominator of the various stages of reaction to stress situations may be charted, using the analogy of a truncated roller coaster. As a result of meeting stress, family members are collectively numbed by the blow. They meet friends at first, as if the blow had not fallen: then, as the facts are assimilated, organization slumps, roles are played with less enthusiasm, resentments are smothered or expressed, conflicts develop or are converted into tensions that strain relations. As the nadir of disorganization is reached, things begin to improve, new routines arrived at by trial and error or by thoughtful planning are put into effect, and some minimum agreements about the future are reached. The component parts of the roller-coaster profile of adjustment to crisis are: stress —————> disorganization —————> recovery —————> reorganization.²⁷

Other studies such as the Jackson studies on family stress, the T. D. Eliot (1946 and 1960) studies on bereavement, and the Bakke study on unemployment refer to additional stages in stress adjustment: (a) attempts to deny the problem; (b) attempts to eliminate the problem; (c) disorganization; (d) efforts to escape the problem; (e) the decision to separate from the problem; (f) reorganization of

²⁷ Hansen, p. 809.

the family without spouse; (g) reorganization of the entire family.²⁸

After this team's study of role theory, perception theory was explored. It was found that when examining perception theory, one cannot overlook the significant interactionary relationship that it has with performance.

Perception is an inferred process and because of its myriad psychological implications, poses considerable difficulty for those attempting to measure this process.

Perception is really not a precise scientific concept, in the same sense as mass or force or cell. Rather, it is an organizing word, a chapter-heading word like mechanics or reproduction. It is a facilitator of communication and therefore a kind of word whose function would be dissipated if its meaning were too narrowly delimited.²⁹

The subject of perception and personality has been studied by man for centuries and therefore can hardly be considered new in spite of our more refined approach today.

It has been nearly fifteen years since the 'new look' at perception burst upon the psychological scene. There is some question about how new it was, but nonetheless it was remarkably effective in generating enthusiasm among psychologists and it sparked innumerable dissertations and investigatory experiments.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ William N. Dember, The Psychology of Perception (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 3.

In essence, it directed experimentalists to look at perception not from the traditional structuralist or Gestalt points of view but as a function of personality and personality dynamics.³⁰

Approaches used in the study of perception have been greatly disputed. Generally, research in the field of perception and personality appears to have fallen into two major subdivisions which corresponded with differences in projective techniques. One was the search for individual differences in perceptual behavior and the other was the investigation of the effects of motivation states or needs upon the perception of objects. Both of these problems have their parallel in the projective tests.³¹ Most research seems to be concerned with the effects of needs or motivational variables upon perception. And this particular line of investigation is itself divided into two distinct areas.

One line of investigation involves study of the effects of various need states upon the degree of distortion of color, size or other dimensions of perceptual stimuli. The other has been concerned

³⁰ Joseph M. Wepman and Ralph W. Heine, Concepts of Personality (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1963), p. 31.

³¹ Ibid., p. 32.

with the recognition of thresholds for neutral and various need-related objects or stimuli.³²

Therefore, while perception does deal with a wide range of stimulus factors, this study was concerned with those factors pertaining to social stimuli having an impact on the subject's self-perception.

However, as was further pointed out, not all stimuli in an individual's environment are patches of color, or geometric forms, or words, or simple inanimate objects. People is one large category of important stimuli with which the personality and the social psychologist are particularly interested. Their interest lies in the way such 'social stimuli' are perceived and responded to since the principles of perception should apply to all stimuli, including complex social stimuli.³³

Solley and Murphy have developed a framework of perception which has been most useful in this study. A detailed account of this perceptual framework with accompanying psychological implications follows:

Perception is also an inferred process. It, too, is unobservable, except in a phenomenological sense. That is, the perceiver observes his own percepts. As a term, perception denotes a process and a product; these two are usually called perceiving and percept respectively.³⁴

³² Ibid., p. 34.

³³ Dember, p. 301.

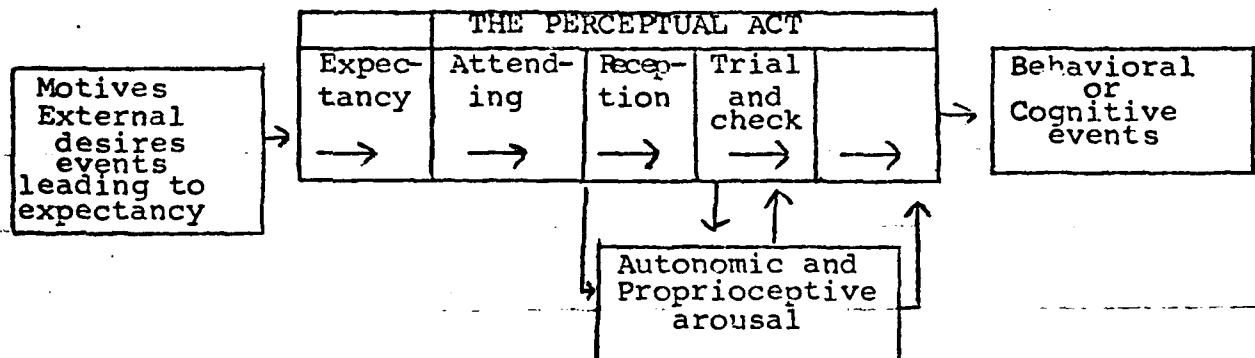
³⁴ Charles M. Solley and Gardner Murphy, Development of the Perceptual World (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1960), p. 16.

Perceiving is not a simple response; it is inferred from behavior and the conditions of behavior in much the same way that learning is inferred from changes in behavior.

It is universally agreed that a physical stimulus must be present and excite some sense receptor or receptors before perception occurs. A sense receptor may be stimulated without perception occurring but perception never occurs without prior sense stimulation. It is further agreed that perceptual traces last for a short time after removal of the physical stimulus, changing into memory, and that continuous presence of the physical stimulus makes it more likely that one is dealing with perception.³⁵

The following is a summary of the perceptual process with an accompanying diagram: "The molar components of the perceptual act are, in summary: (a) perceptual expectancy; (b) attending; (c) reception; (d) trial and check; and (e) final perceptual organization."³⁶

DIAGRAM I



³⁵ Ibid., pp. 16, 17.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

The arrows indicate the major transitions between expectancy, attending, reception, trial-and-check, autonomic and proprioceptive arousal, and the final structured percept. Admittedly, the perceptual process, the process of structuring stimulation, does not consist of way stations which are rigidly separated from one another. There is overlapping and articulation between the subprocesses, and many more arrows could be drawn. Indeed, we find it convenient to define perception as the structuring of stimulation, and percepts vary considerably in structuredness.³⁷

The significant relationship perception has with performance is emphasized by the following note: "In a real sense our perceptions coordinate our actions with our environment so that we can successfully meet our needs."³⁸ Therefore, in studying perceptions or actions (performance) one must recognize that they are inextricably linked. To examine one's performance is to study the result of one's perception. In like manner the only knowledge of perceptions one may have is when the perception is manifested in behavior or action.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 25, 26.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

CHAPTER III

RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study is a descriptive one using wives' reported performance and their reported perception of their ability to function in the husbands' absence. Concern was limited to descriptive comparison of the manner in which wives perceived their functioning relative to their families and their report of actual performance in four areas of family responsibility: discipline, family relations, financial management, and reaction to crisis. It was assumed that absence of the husband on an "unaccompanied" tour of approximately twelve months would have an effect upon the wife's functioning relative to her family.

CHAPTER IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In reviewing literature on separation in military families it became apparent that the question of the wives' PERF was a concept that previously had been identified as an unresearched query. The researchers pointed to the need for investigation of this problem.¹ It was indicated that, possibly, ". . . wives, more so than their husbands, could accurately and realistically predict the actual level of difficulty they will experience,"² in their husbands' absence. This indication was the impetus which led to the present descriptive study. This research team was taking an assessment of the wives' past coping (PAF), as reported by them, and comparing it with their reported performance or "actual level of difficulty" experienced. In so doing, it is possible to test the suggested "possibility" mentioned previously, that wives, more so than their husbands, can "accurately and realistically predict the actual level

¹ Baker, et al., p. 20.

² Ibid., p. 21.

of difficulty" to be experienced in their spouses' absence. There are many ways to study family functioning; one such was to view perceptions and reports of actual performance.

Statement of Study Proposition and Relevance

At the time of this study, separations in military families were common. They can also be found in nonmilitary families. For the nonmilitary, such separations may be relatively short and occasioned by events generally considered to be without danger and in the benefit of the family, such as new jobs or preparing to settle in another city. However, for the people with which this study was concerned, separation represents a potential threat to the integrity of the family. The father may be a casualty of war, he may be killed, injured, or changed emotionally. His absence alone may have an effect upon the family.

Army social work is largely concerned with dependents of active duty personnel. Army social work's mission is the same as the Army Medical Service's--to conserve the fighting strength. Effective family functioning in the husband's absence is vital to his well-being and peace of mind. Effective family functioning under these conditions

was felt to be largely a function of the "substitute" head-of-household's functioning. This was assumed to be the wife. Her functioning was dependent on both her feelings about her capacities and abilities and the congruence of these with her report of actual performance.

The Purpose of Inquiry

In brief, the intent of this inquiry was to describe a phase of the separation period which thus far has been speculative. The relevance of the knowledge obtained, hopefully, will contribute some understanding to separation in military families and possibly separation in other families for reasons other than marital discord. It was also hoped that this research document would suggest fruitful areas and approaches for further study.

CHAPTER V

ASSUMPTIONS

Adjustment and readjustment are a constant source of frustration for those in the military who face the crisis of separation. The Moores stressed "the fact that demands for adjustment and readjustment in family life are a major pressure for men to leave the service, often in face of a real desire to continue their military careers."¹ Therefore, it was assumed there would be a significant statistical difference in PAF responses between the wives of career officers and noncareer officers.

There are, indeed, many factors which have significant impacts on the military family with the husband absent. Some of these are: the withdrawal from one particular school and social milieu and entry into another, adjustment to the loss created by the absence of a parent, the maintenance of meaningful communication, and the serious challenge to the integrity and adaptive capacity of the family unit.²

¹ Family Life Resource Guide, p. 55.

² Baker, et al., Sec. II, p. 1.

Such elements create problems with which these families must deal. These problems may bring about emotional obstacles in the life situation which, even though temporary in nature, are no less real than a permanent one. Especially in cases of families with younger children, there often results a loss of security on the part of the children. Knowledge of human behavior supports this, in that most crucial personality development occurs during childhood, and the loss of a parent from the immediate environment of the child brings about the loss of one of the most important of two persons in early personality development. With any member of the family group leaving, role changes take place. The effect of such a loss must be weighed against the cohesion of the group. Certain members may feel a great loss, while others may have little concern. With the husband leaving, functions of the absent spouse must be carried on by someone else or not at all. Some of the roles may be difficult or impossible for the remaining spouse to carry on. This role reorganization contributes to the familial difficulty encountered in the separation crisis.

Moreover, the nature of choices made in solving the crises problems determines whether the individuals concerned emerged with an increased or reduced

capacity to handle themselves in problem situations. Choices can be modified in a healthy or unhealthy direction by intervention of key people, such as chaplains, social workers, Family Service personnel, and others especially designated to assist military families during the crisis period.³

This suggests that wives reporting they received professional assistance with their problems would demonstrate better PERF than those wives indicating similar difficulties, but who failed to obtain professional assistance.

Scapegoating is commonly practiced during the reaction to crisis period. It was assumed that this method of displacement was a means of punishing others who were directly or indirectly responsible for placing the wife in a position that forced her to function autonomously and then to accept the consequences of her individual decisions.

In the area of school adjustment problems, Murphy and Zoobuck found that

the absence of the father from the home causes separation of the father and child, and anxiety and frustration of the mother. . . . The return of the father frequently upsets the emotional balance established in his absence. . . .⁴

³Family Life Resource Guide, pp. 58-59.

⁴Murphy and Zoobuck, p. 35.

It is suggested here that these factors also have an impact on the total adjustment of the family.

Another assumption in this study concerns the respondents. It was anticipated that the wives of officers would, in general, have a higher level of education than the general population, for their husbands would tend to have college degrees. Sociologically speaking, people tend to marry others with reasonably similar educational backgrounds. For this reason it was assumed that their ability to evaluate accurately their functioning would be greater, and also that their ability to articulate their evaluation would be greater for the same reason.

It was also assumed that, because the older wives had been exposed more often to separation due to longer years in the military service, they would manifest both a better concept of their PAF and PERF than their younger counterparts. This can be attributed to experience and learning gained through earlier separations. This assumption was made despite the fact that studies done at Walter Reed General Hospital had shown that certain additional or new stresses, such as ". . . a misbehaving teenager, may override benefits derived earlier."⁵

⁵ Baker, et al., Sec. II, p. 11.

Finally, it is granted that in the general population some large families function very well, while some small families function very poorly and vice versa. It was therefore assumed that familial management would not be negatively or positively affected by the size of the family.

CHAPTER VI

STATEMENT OF STUDY CONCEPTS

The concept of PAF as employed in this study refers to the wives' subjective impression of their operational competence as head of the family in the absence of the husband. The wives' "subjective impression" indicates their specific feeling and attitude concerning their functional role as head-of-household based upon their interpretation of what has occurred, such as determination of their conduct in past events and consequent subjective evaluation of their ability to function as heads of the household.

PERF, the other relevant concept of this study, was concerned with the wives' discharge of familial duties as reported by them. Measurement of this key factor was accomplished through the use of specific questions relating to completed occurrences.

In addition, the term "separation" as seen in the context of this study was not used in the normal sense.

Rather than indicating a parting of husband and wife due to marital conflict or incompatibility, it denotes an absence

of the husband due to military orders. Separation is defined in a circumscribed manner because in the military community and the United States, as a whole, the extended family has been replaced in large part by the nuclear family unit. As a result of relatives being less available, the ties within the smaller family unit have become stronger. Therefore, the absence of one family member, especially a husband or wife, is highly disruptive.¹ Although the average military family of this decade is extremely mobile and accustomed to frequent moves, the husband's absence is a constant threat to the family role structure. Quite frequently, within recent years, the husband received orders for an unaccompanied overseas assignment and, for the most part, these assignments were twelve to thirteen months. This created a circumstance in which the family may or may not have relocated, but in either case it caused a disruption in the operation of the family.

¹ Family Life Resource Guide, p. 57.

CHAPTER VII

SETTING OF THE STUDY

The following were the conditions under which this study was performed:

The collection of data was during a time of undeclared war in Viet Nam in which all servicemen were viewed as potential combatants. The entire study was conducted at a time when the four parties with major interests in the war were negotiating in Paris. In addition, the site of the study, San Antonio, Texas, is commonly referred to as a "military town" due to the presence of five military installations and a large number of retired military personnel.

The study population being described herein shared these traits: all of the respondents were women, married to Army officers, separated due to military orders, and located in the greater metropolitan San Antonio area. No restriction was made on the inclusion of characteristics which may be useful in the later description of the population.

Separation was considered an independent variable

in that it was unaffected by other variables in the study, and in actuality was the precipitative factor for the subsequent conditions. By limiting the study to separated Army officers' wives, reduction of extraneous variables which would influence a larger, more heterogeneous population was held to a minimum. For example, enlisted men may have more or different stress which could affect their families, also the differences between enlisted men's families' backgrounds could possibly lead to different perceptions about the separation among their wives as compared to officers' wives. It has been considered, therefore, that inclusion of all military wives who were separated, would introduce such an abundance of uncontrollable factors as to render the study unwieldy.

As a result of one having some idea of how he will perform previous to occupying a role, PAF is considered an intervening variable. The wives are well aware, before their husbands' absence, of their orders to leave and have varying amounts of time to consider the implications. Hence, perceptual process precedes performance.¹ Therefore, PAF

¹See Diagram, p. 19.

was the intervening variable between separation and PERF.

The dependent variable under study was performance. This position was supported by a paradigm of the perceptual act.² The paradigm demonstratively points out that the event of separation occurs, then is followed by an intricate process leading to the formation of a precept, the intervening variable, and finally results in PERF, a variable dependent upon the separation event and the precept.

Methodology

In the sampling process, a population of Army officers' wives, whose husbands were on unaccompanied tours of duty, volunteered from a population of women who met the separation criteria, provided by Army Community Service (ACS) at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The sample population was notified of their selection for the study by mail and later the instrument was mailed to them with a return envelope. It is important to note that not all of the women on the ACS list were involved in womens' groups.

The total population was approximately two hundred women. This figure would not be considered the total

² Ibid.

number of "waiting wives" in San Antonio, would would represent those who, through established military channels or self-referrals, have been registered with the ACS program.

The number of officers' wives registered with the ACS has been approximately two hundred for the past five years. This figure was significantly reduced for the research population, by the limitations and scope of this paper.

In carefully examining the dynamics of this type of population, it was felt that in order to obtain the most accurate response, it would be necessary to question the participants between their fifth and ninth months of separation. For this reason, although tours of duty are for the most part twelve months in length, the sample was limited to those women between their fifth and ninth months. The rationale for eliminating the other months was based on assumptions supported by clinical observation. For the purposes of this study it was taken that the first five months and the last three months of separation were times of adjustment. It was also postulated that the first few months were spent adjusting to the absence of the husband and assuming the roles that he had relinquished by his

absence. It was suggested that the last three months were a time when the women were faced with the realization that the husband was soon to return and they would have to relinquish the roles they had assumed in his absence. The specific periods of five months and three months were obviously affected by many variables, and thus were arbitrarily chosen to obtain the most valid responses. This theoretical framework was established through the clinical observations of several of the professional staff in the Psychiatry, Psychology, and Social Work sections of Brooke General Hospital, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The original intent, in obtaining a study sample, was to obtain as many subjects as possible from the total population of 200. However, when those women outside of the parameters of the study were eliminated, the research population had been narrowed to 118. A letter of introduction and an appeal for their participation in the study was then mailed to these women.³ The letter also included a form for obtaining demographic information from those ~~wives who were willing to participate.~~⁴ The number of

³ See Appendix A.

⁴ See Appendix B.

women, who responded and agreed to become involved, was ninety-six. There were several factors that served to narrow the final sample down to sixty. Some of the women, after indicating they would respond to the first questionnaire, did not. Still other wives sent back the first questionnaire but not the second one. A second letter was mailed to those women who had not initially responded. The final return was 62 per cent, or a total of sixty.

During the first week in July, 1969, the first mailing was made to all those wives whose husbands had been absent from five to nine months.⁵ Thereafter, mailings were conducted on the first and fifteenth of each month, as the fifth month absence was reached. The last mailing occurred on August 15, 1969. A letter of reminder was then sent to those women who were more than three weeks late in returning their questionnaires.⁶ By the beginning of September, it was decided that time was of essence so no more questionnaires were mailed out.

Each participant was given an identification number

⁵ See Appendixes C and D.

⁶ See Appendix E.

which was placed on the demographic sheet and each of the two questionnaires. The PAF and PERF questionnaires each contained seventeen matched questions concerning familial functioning. In an attempt to prevent the women from remembering or looking back to match their answers, the questionnaires were mailed separately. The second instrument was mailed two weeks after the first one was received.

There was no way to control completely the possibility of wives matching their PAF and PERF answers. As one precaution, the PAF and PERF questionnaires were each sent alternately to the participants so that half of the women received the former instrument first, and the other half received the latter questionnaire first.

Due to the aforementioned limitations, this team encountered considerable difficulty because the population under study was an extremely fluid one. The majority of the population had already been separated between five and nine months when their initial demographic data questionnaire was received by the research group. Each day that elapsed meant the loss of more women from the population because they passed the ninth month of their separation. Thus, it was necessary to question many of the women

immediately after they agreed to participate. In other words, there were more wives in their ninth month of separation than there were in their fourth month. Eleven women were in their ninth month, while only seven were in their fourth.

As the team recognized that a sizable portion of the population was to be lost and that time would not be sufficient to replace those lost with newly separated women, a pretest was not conducted. It was felt that the consequences of losing a significant portion of the population would far outweigh any gains acquired through a pretest.

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The demographic data gathered for this study revealed an interesting vignette of the women in the study population. Of the 60 women in the final sample, 52 of their husbands were in Viet Nam, six were in Korea, and two were in other isolated areas of the world. It was hoped that a comparison could be made between those wives whose husbands were in Viet Nam and those who were in less hostile areas. This was not possible, however, due to the sparsity of wives whose husbands were stationed outside of Viet Nam.

A very relevant finding was that 30, or exactly one-half of the women involved, had experienced previous military separations, all of which were more than six months' duration. The figure of 50 per cent of the wives having previous separations is quite significant in the total concept of this research inquiry because it suggests that many of the difficulties and anxieties encountered by these women may have been experienced previously. This same

figure of 50 per cent also demonstrates that a high geographic mobility factor was present in these families. Furthermore, it was found that 24, or two-thirds, of the 30 women were mothers who had experienced the previous separations within the past five years. This would indicate that not only was a great deal of pressure applied to the marital relationship but also to the emotional development of the children. Sporadic paternal absence from the family scene a year at a time and occurring twice within a five-year period was a very meaningful and significant element that does not occur without its effects, as can be seen below.

The data revealed that 42 of the 60 women had children. Out of the 42 mothers, including those mothers of infants, 19 reported having some measure of behavioral difficulty with their children. When the stresses of parental loss are manifested by misbehavior, the remaining parent must deal with the problem. The data suggests that the shifting of parental roles, the development of the conscience, the Oedipus conflict and the development of skills, plus the identification process and the independent strivings of children are all subjected to the stressful factors of paternal absences. Thus, this data supports the findings

mentioned in "Review of the Literature" regarding the psychological effects on children in father-absent military families. Further corroboration comes from the premises developed by Dr. Thomas L. Trunnell in his study of "The Absent Father's Children's Emotional Disturbances."¹ He assessed three groups of hypotheses in a civilian population. These hypotheses were based on a previous clinical study conducted by Dr. Trunnell. The three hypotheses tested were:

(1) Paternal absence during early childhood is a significant psychotoxic event and correlates with the form and severity of emotional problems manifested by children; (2) Efforts at restitution (reacting to the loss) with the missing father are pervasive in the child's behavior; (3) Paternal absence while significant, is never a sole factor in the final picture of the child's personality. To assess these premises, charts of 109 father-absent children, and 50 father-present children were reviewed in a civilian child guidance clinic for a 20 month period. The data from these charts generally supported the hypotheses.²

The demographic information regarding those 42 respondents who were mothers also showed that 27 of them

¹Thomas L. Trunnell, "The Absent Father's Children's Emotional Disturbances," Archives of General Psychiatry, XIX (August, 1968), 180.

²Ibid., p. 186.

gave at least part of their time to work, either paid or voluntary. This appeared to be part of a pattern of "trying to keep busy," or, as the Moores stated, "action merely for the sake of action."³

The demographic material further divulged that 15 of the 18, or 83 per cent, of the women without children worked, while 64 per cent of the mothers had work outside of the home. A total of 42 women worked.

The wives' response to their husbands' tenure in the service demonstrated quite a diversity. The mean years in the service was 9.78 years, with the mode being two years. A large number of junior officers accounts for this wide variation. Closely associated with tenure was the significant factor involving career officers versus noncareer officers. Of the 60 women in the sample, 49 reported that their husbands were career officers, while nine did not consider their husbands to be career officers, and two did not respond to the question.

The data revealed the mean age for wives to be 29.8

³Family Life Resource Guide, p. 60.

years with a bimodal distribution peaking at 22 and 26 years. Their husbands averaged slightly more than two years older at 32.1 years. The mean number of years that the couples had been married was found to be nine, with the mode being three years. The difference between the mean and the mode was explained by the fact that most of the officers were lieutenants while a few were colonels. The latter raised the mean; the former accounted for the low mode.

Another relevant factor disclosed the level of education of the wives. Sixteen of the women received a high-school education while the same number of women received college degrees. A total of 27 wives had some college education but had not completed degree requirements. Only one of the wives had a graduate degree. It is possible that the mobility factor of service families is an instrumental constituent in preventing wives from obtaining a graduate degree.

A rather surprising fact was that 31 of the 60 wives reported that they lived either with or near relatives in the San Antonio area. This, of course, pointed out the significance of the military community in San Antonio. It also tended to augment the idea that military families form

a subculture that is self-supporting in times of need. The very fact that the study population came from an organized, functioning "Waiting Wives Club" is an indication that the Army wife finds support from this subculture. Although all of the women did not actively participate in the Club's activities, they were on its mailing list and were aware of its existence.

The instrument used to gain demographic information from the wives asked them merely to check various responses; however, many of the women wrote in personal comments. This team found the comments most helpful in understanding the wives' true feelings regarding the absence of their husbands. Facts and figures are, of course, essential but these comments served to epitomize the feelings of these women and their families in the husbands' absence. In regard to work experience outside the home, one wife stated that "volunteer work provides a needed outlet for me," while another wife said, "I feel my responsibility is to my home and children." Concerning the children's reaction, the wives related, "This seems to be a problem with my husband gone, they feel more independent and hard to handle . . .

seem to be resentful about any discipline from me;" ". . . restless, bored, miss their father;" ". . . eight-year-old experienced stomach pains and vomiting for about three weeks. I believe this was due to changing schools and father leaving at the same time;" ". . . general rebellion against female authority at home and school;" ". . . five-year-old son became somewhat withdrawn;" ". . . son, age twelve, tries to talk back more frequently;" "My two-year-old had emotional and behavioral problems due to his father's absence."

In reference to the husband's absence influencing her own parental role, one wife stated, "I run out of patience and become more tense and then usually yell." Another wife explained, "I have always been in charge of the accounts and children as he has had four undesirable tours. I believe he becomes more of a single man each time!" In regard to financial matters being affected by the husbands' absence, wives reported, "An occasional shopping spree blows the budget but cheers the spirit;" "I've spent money unnecessarily and perhaps used my spending as a therapy."

The words found in the front of this paper from one of the mothers very aptly summarized the plight of these families:

I try to make the children understand the difficulties of our present situation; that they, too, must strive at getting along. It's very difficult for my children this year without their father. He always spent a great deal of quiet times with them, discussing whatever they wished to discuss. . . .

Because of the nature of the material which came out of the study, the most refined technique of statistical significance which could be used was the Chi square test.

The analysis of demographic material produced generally negative findings when compared with general perception. Because the findings were generally negative, no broadly descriptive statements can be made on the basis of the data produced, differentiating between those with low general perception scores and high ones.⁴

The material of higher significance was that in which responses to PAF and/or PERF on individual questions were divided into two respective groups and compared by means of

⁴The PAF and PERF questionnaires had an equal number of corresponding questions. Each question had from two to seven possible responses. The research team rated each respective possible response as being either positive or negative. The respondents' answers were coded according to their rating as being positive or negative. Corresponding to the ratings, a general perception score was computed. The general perception is the sum of those PAF and PERF answers which positively correlated, that is, both answered positive or both answered negative.

the Chi square test of significance. The point at which the division was made was the arithmetic mean of all of the general perception scores. This was 9.53. The range of the general perception scores was from a low of three to a high of thirteen.

In the analysis it was found that there were no statistical differences on any of the replies between those who were sent their PAF questionnaire first and those who were sent their PERF questionnaires first.

Of the thirty wives who replied on their PAF questionnaire, that they had not felt more dependent on relatives since their husbands' departure, only two failed to have a PERF score which corresponded positively with their PAF response. Interestingly enough, of the other thirty wives who indicated in their PAF that they felt more dependent on relatives since their husbands' departure, only one had PAF and PERF scores which negatively correlated on this particular question. It may be suggested that the women's feelings of dependence could be seen as an index of their general functioning.

In pursuing this question further, PAF and PERF were compared to determine how many of the respondents whose two

scores matched were above the general perception score of 9.53 and how many were below this average. The women with matched scores were then compared to those whose scores did not match to show the latter's positioning relative to the mean.

TABLE 1
EVALUATION OF DEPENDENCE

	Above mean of 9.53	Below mean of 9.53	Total
Scores matched	22	7	29
Scores did not match	10	21	31
Total	32	28	60

Chi square = 11.3

$p < .001$

This demonstrates that those women who perceived they were not dependent clearly reported that they were performing in an independent fashion. However, those wives who showed mismatched PAF and PERF scores significantly fell below the mean in accurately estimating their performance as compared with their perception.

When the self-description of the respondents' emotional state during the husband's absence was examined, it becomes clear that no significant difference occurred between those women who on their PERF answers taken alone showed little or no impact emotionally to the absence and those who saw in their reaction a great deal of emotional effect.

TABLE 2

SELF-DESCRIPTION OF EMOTIONAL STATE
DUE TO HUSBAND'S ABSENCE

	No effect Never Rarely Sometimes	Some effect Usually Always	Total
Above the mean of 9.53	20	12	32
Below the mean of 9.53	21	7	28
Total	41	19	60

Chi square = 1.09 $p < .30$

However, when self-evaluation of the respondents' emotional state was studied, by taking those women who showed positive scores on both PAF and PERF, there emerged a significant difference.

TABLE 3

EVALUATION OF EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF
HUSBAND'S ABSENCE

	Above mean of 9.53	Below mean of 9.53	Total
Scores matched	18	6	24
Scores did not match	14	22	36
Total	32	28	60

Chi square = 7.52 $p < .01$

Shown in percentages, 75 per cent, or 18, of those whose PERF and PAF scores were matched were above the population mean for general perception, while only 38.89 per cent whose scores did not match fell above the general perception mean for the population. This may indicate that an evaluation of the emotional effects of husband absence on the respondents had little meaning in terms of their performance unless their feelings were also taken into consideration.

A lack of significance was found when contrasting the general perception scores to that of functioning as head of the household. The matched and unmatched scores

showed no apparent significance. The reason for this may be due to a semantical problem, that is, how the particular PAF and PERF questions were couched on the questionnaire. The PAF question concerned "responsibilities for the family," as the women were directed to indicate whether or not their responsibilities had increased. The PERF question, however, dealt with "functioning as head of the household." Thus, it may be validly argued that the questions are dealing with quite different areas.

Because this argument can be posited, the PERF responses were considered apart from the PAF. In doing so, some significance was noted.⁵ Of those wives who stated their functioning was greatly improved and those whose functioning remained unchanged, 60.9 per cent, or 25, were above the general perception mean for the population. Those wives who indicated that their functioning as head of the household was somewhat to greatly worsened had 36.7 per cent above the general perception mean.

⁵ $<.05$

TABLE 4

SELF-EVALUATION OF FUNCTIONING AS
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

	Above mean of 9.53	Below mean of 9.53	Total
Greatly improved Remained unchanged	25	16	41
Somewhat worsened Greatly worsened	7	12	19
Total	32	28	60

Chi square = 3.04 $p < .10$

Those respondents, then, who felt themselves performing well as head of the household and whose performance corroborated this, generally fell above the population mean in answering other PAF and PERF questions. Those wives who fell below the population in their response to the question concerning head of household, also fell below the population mean in other areas on the questionnaires.

It was expected that several variables would affect the mothers' functioning while living with or in close proximity to relatives. The team supposed that such things as conflict of values and patterns of family management

would lead to less effective functioning. Interestingly, and converse to the expectations, there was no significant difference in their general perception scores. This indicates that proximity to relatives had little or no bearing on the women's perception of adequacy of functioning or their actual performance.

Another area of inquiry dealt with the women's estimation of their children's behavior in the fathers' absence.

TABLE 5
EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR IN
FATHER'S ABSENCE

	Above mean of 9.53	Below mean of 9.53	Total
Never, Rarely have discipline problems	15	8	23
Sometimes, Always have discipline problems	5	14	19
Total	20	22	42

Chi square = 6.30 $p < .02$

It was found that 65.2 per cent of those mothers who reported having discipline problems with their children,

rarely or never, were above the general perception mean for the population. However, of those mothers who reported sometimes or always having discipline problems with their children only 26.3 per cent, or five, were above the general perception mean.

Because the number of respondents with children is smaller than the total population, less can validly be generalized from their replies than can be said for the total population. With this reservation it may be suggested that the data reflects that the wives with children who experienced discipline problems also experience problems in other areas of their family life and personal adjustment.

Surprisingly, when the general perception scores of those women with high-school diplomas were contrasted with those who had some college, college degrees, and some graduate experience, the former had better general perception scores.⁶ However, upon further inquiry, it was found that the respondents with some college experience actually lowered the general perception score in their respective

⁶ Chi square = 2.0 $p < .20$.

group. Unfortunately, the distribution was such that the Chi square test of significance was not usable.

As noted earlier, there was an assumption that those officers' wives who were older and had been married longer, would fare better in their PAF and PERF than the younger women with fewer years of marriage. However, neither of these groups indicated a significant statistical difference. Therefore, it may be said that age and length of marriage would not necessarily be an indication of which wives would encounter problems during their husbands' unaccompanied tour. Additionally, the data concerning wives with prior separation versus those with no prior separation showed no significant difference which would appear to support the above, since the older and longer married women would seemingly be more exposed to separation.

It had also been anticipated that a comparison could be made concerning responses of those wives of career officers versus those responses of noncareer officers. However, the wives of noncareer officers were so few that this type of comparative analysis was not possible.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY

This study dealt with describing separation within a select population and some of the effects of such separation. It was conducted in San Antonio, Texas, during parts of 1969 and 1970. The population was limited to Army officers' wives who were in the metropolitan area of San Antonio. The concern of this paper was to describe the separation through looking at the wives' perception of their functioning and of their performance. Comparison of the women's perception of adequacy of functioning and their performance was made in four areas which were: (1) Family Relationships, (2) Discipline, (3) Financial Management, and (4) Reaction to Crisis.

The information was gathered by means of three coded questionnaires which were sent at regular intervals to each woman in the population. One questionnaire was concerned only with the demographic aspects of the study, while the two others dealt with the women's perception of adequacy of functioning and performance, respectively.

It was found that the order in which the questionnaires were answered produced no significant differences

in the women's replies. Wives' feelings of increased dependency on relatives or lack of it appeared to have a significant effect on their general functioning.

Converse to expectations, proximity to relatives had no significant effect on either the women's PAF or PERF. Additionally, older women did not prove to have better perception than the younger women as had been assumed.

In the area of functioning as head of household, the wives' performance appeared to follow their self-image. They performed well if they thought they would, or performed otherwise if a negative self-concept was held in this area. Self-evaluation of emotional effects of husband absence was found to have little meaning in terms of performance. Those wives experiencing serious discipline problems with their children also were found to be having problems in other areas involving social adjustment.

The women with some college were found to have lower general perception scores than either those with high-school diplomas only or with a college degree. However, the number of those in the two categories was so small that statistical analysis was not possible.

The prior separation factor proved to be of little consequence to both PAF or PERF scores. Mind-set appeared to have detracted from the benefit of prior separation which was assumed would significantly affect both PAF and PERF.

A comparative analysis could not be made between the wives of career officers and noncareer. Neither could an analysis be made of those in different tour areas because of the small number of those who were noncareer and not in the Republic of Viet Nam.

The crisis situation experienced by the families in this study is one that is duplicated in many Army families, both in the officer and enlisted ranks. Due to the high incidence of military separations and the impact it has upon families, it is recommended that the father-absent families be identified by the Army.

This identification, through the Army personnel channels, should in the opinion of the research group be forwarded to the Army Community Service. The ACS would hopefully assume the responsibility of implementing new programs in conjunction with other agencies for providing services to these families such as social work clinics,

military and civilian, the Red Cross, and others. In recognizing the large number of people this would entail, it is felt that use of recreational groups and therapy groups would be extremely beneficial in dealing with the emotional adjustment of children to the father's absence.

The impact of financial difficulties and overall adjustment posed relatively minor problems. The most significant area of concern was the relative adjustment of the children to parental separation. Therefore, it is recommended that the Army intensify its efforts in programs focused on children's adjustment to father absence.

Future studies regarding perception and performance in the family during the separation crisis should be considered in view of the difficulties experienced by this research team. Unfortunately, due to the time factor involved and the fluidity of the population, the questionnaires had to be mailed to the respondents instead of being presented to them in personal interviews. As a result, several of the wives in the study population were forced to exclude or write down questions concerning certain portions of the instrument of which they were unsure. Personal interviews would have clarified much of the uncertainty and insured more valid responses.

Certainly the factor of perception, as used in the context of this study, was a problem factor. Very little related literature was found that could adequately support or contradict this team's position regarding the term. Thus, this group was confronted with the task of conceptualizing and putting into operation officers' wives' perception of the adequacy of their familial functioning. While visual perception currently pervades the behavioral science literature, self-perception is relatively rare! Hopefully, the concept of PAF, as utilized in this study, will aid in the understanding of self-perception.

An additional problem was that the sample was not large or diversified enough to measure certain factors statistically.

Finally, separation is expected to be manifested in the military and civilian population in the future. Studies will vary in scope and inclusiveness, however, inasmuch as separation continues to be a problem affecting American family life, studies should be ongoing. Future studies may contribute to understanding the complexities of

the problem, ascertaining which conditions serve to increase or decrease the problems of separation, and to conceive of possible therapeutic measures which will be useful in lessening the problems experienced before, during, and after separation.

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters
Brooke General Hospital
Brooke Army Medical Center
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234

26 May 1969

Separation because of military orders can be a cause of problems for some families. Our research team from the Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake College in conjunction with the Social Work Service of Brooke General Hospital are in the process of studying the effects of a husband's being away from his family. We hope that by this study we may be able to help families make a more rapid and effective adjustment.

The enclosed questionnaire is part of our effort. We are attempting to learn more about the composition of families whose husbands are away. Therefore, your participation in answering the following questions is greatly needed. We would appreciate your returning the completed questionnaire by the fifth of June. We have enclosed a self-addressed envelope.

All names will be held in confidence (known only by the research staff) and will not be mentioned in the formal report. In the event you agree to participate, two additional questionnaires will be sent to you at a later date.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Very truly yours,

JACKSON D. PURCELL
CPT, MSC
Social Work Officer

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

1. Where is your husband stationed? RVN ____ Korea ____
Other ____

2. Number of months he has been absent. _____

3. Career Officer? _____

4. Has husband previously been assigned to an unaccompanied
tour of more than six months? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, when, where, how long? _____

5. Husband's years in Service _____. 6. Type of Work _____

7. How many years have you been married? _____

8. Your age _____ 9. Husband's age _____.

10. Your religious preference _____

11. Husband's religious preference _____

12. Your education _____

13. Husband's education _____

14. Ages and sex of children:

15. Town and state where your parents live _____

16. Town and state where husband's parents live _____

17. Do you live with or near relatives in San Antonio?

18. Would you be willing to participate in further related studies? _____

19. Have you sought guidance or counseling about or during your husband's absence? _____ If so, with whom? _____

APPENDIX C

LETTERS OF INSTRUCTION

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability and return them in the envelope provided. Within a short time you will receive the final questionnaire.

Let us assure you again that the information you provide us with will not be connected with your name to anyone except our research team. It is our hope that as a result of this study more understanding of the problems of military separation will prepare us to be of more help to those in need.

If you have problems or questions in answering the questionnaire feel free to call 221-4237 and ask for CPT Purcell.

Dear Mrs. _____:

You were very kind several weeks ago to fill out our questionnaire. The information collected from the completed questionnaire has been extremely helpful to our research team. Now we are in the second phase of our research project and we again need your help.

Enclosed is another questionnaire that we would appreciate your filling out. It is quite a bit more extensive than the last one. In it we would please ask that you give us an accurate account of your feelings and attitudes concerning the manner in which your family is presently functioning. We ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the self-addressed, stamped envelope as soon as possible.

We sincerely thank you in advance for your invaluable cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

JACKSON D. PURCELL
CPT, MSC
Social Work Officer

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRES

PAF QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you feel your responsibilities for your family have increased since your husband's departure?
- Yes ____ No ____
- 1a. If yes, do you feel your increased responsibilities have positively ____; negatively ____; not ____; affected your family's function?
2. Do you feel your husband's absence has had a negative effect on you emotionally?
- Yes ____ No ____
3. Do you feel that professional help outside the family has been beneficial to you in the absence of your husband?
- Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____
4. Do you feel you have become more dependent on relatives or friends in your husband's absence?
- Yes ____ No ____
5. Do you feel you have created sufficient opportunity for social participation (church, school, recreational functions) for your family?
- Yes ____ No ____
6. Do you feel that an outside job has hindered fulfilling your family responsibilities?
- Yes ____ No ____ No Job ____
- 6a. How many hours a week do you work? _____
7. Do you feel that your participation in volunteer service

organizations has hindered fulfilling your family responsibilities?

Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____

7a. How many hours per week do you volunteer work? _____

8. Have you felt it necessary or advisable to consult your husband on family matters via letters or tapes?

Yes ____ No ____

9. Do you feel you have experienced financial difficulty in your husband's absence?

Yes ____ No ____

10. Do you think that you have done well managing the financial affairs of the family?

Yes ____ No ____

11. Do you feel you and your family (excluding your husband) are spending too much money on entertainment?

Yes ____ No ____

12. Since your husband's departure, do you feel that you have been prompt in paying bills?

Yes ____ No ____

If you have children, please complete the following section.

13. Do you feel you have been successful in involving the children in household tasks while your husband is away?

Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____

14. Do you feel you have positively effected your children's behavior at school in your husband's absence?

Yes ____ No ____

15. In the absence of your spouse, do you feel your children have been well behaved?

Yes ____ No ____

16. Do you feel your children have experienced unusual behavior problems in your husband's absence?

Yes ____ No ____

17. Do you feel you have disciplined your children as well in your husband's absence as in his presence?

Yes ____ No ____

PERF QUESTIONNAIRE

1. For each of the following items check the response that applies to your functioning as head-of-household in your husband's absence.
 - a. Family management has
greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; remained unchanged ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.
 - b. Discipline has
greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; remained unchanged ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.
 - c. Family relationships have
greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; remained unchanged ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.
 - d. Meaningful social activities in the community have
greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; remained unchanged ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.
2. For each of the following items check the response which best describes you emotionally since your husband's departure.

- a. Feel nervous
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.
 - b. Loss of appetite
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.
 - c. Lose sleep
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.
 - d. Feel tired
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.
 - e. Feel depressed
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.
3. Please indicate by an X in the appropriate space the extent you have used each of the following services for yourself and/or your family.
- a. Consulted a doctor (other than a psychiatrist)
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.
 - b. Consulted a social worker
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

c. Consulted a psychiatrist

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

d. Consulted a lawyer

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

e. Consulted a clergyman

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

f. Consulted a financial expert

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

g. Other, if any specify

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

4. Have you sought advice from friends or relatives in the areas listed below:

a. financial matters

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

b. discipline of children

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

c. making social plans

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

d. home management

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

e. marital problems

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

5. Check the appropriate response to each of the following questions.

a. Does your family attend church functions?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

b. Does your family attend school social functions?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

c. Does your family participate together in recreation outside the home?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

d. Does your family participate in organizational

activities, such as scouting, little league, etc.?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;

very frequently ____.

6. If you held a job since your husband's departure, check the response that is most accurate for each of the following items.

- a. The job creates more tension for me and thus creates difficulty in my handling of family affairs.

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;

always ____.

- b. My husband expresses displeasure at my being employed

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;

always ____.

- c. The job produces strain leading to physical illness in me

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;

always ____.

7. If you participated in volunteer activities for a service organization since your husband's departure, check the response that is most accurate for each of the following items.

- a. The volunteer work creates more tension for me and thus creates difficulty in my handling of family affairs

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;

always ____.

b. My husband expresses displeasure at my volunteer work
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

c. The volunteer work produces strain leading to physical illness in me
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

8. For each of the following items check the response that most accurately answers the question.

a. In his communication with you does your husband make decisions concerning the disciplining of the children?
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

b. In his communications with you does your husband give you advice on managing the budget?
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

c. Do communications with your husband help to improve family relationships?
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

d. Do communications with your husband provide assistance in family management?
never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

- e. In communicating with your husband does he give you advice on his feelings about your social life?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

9. For each of the following items check the response that best describes what has occurred since your husband's absence.

- a. Ran out of money before the end of the month

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

- b. Had to borrow money for necessities

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

- c. Was unable to pay bills due to a lack of funds

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

10. For each of the following items check the response that best answers each question.

- a. Have you sought guidance on routine financial matters?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
-always ____.

- ~~b. Have you experienced difficulty balancing your checkbook?~~

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

c. Have you overdrawn your checking account?

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

11. What per cent of your family's total income per month is spent for entertainment ?

____ 5% or less
____ more than 5% but less than 10%
____ more than 10% but less than 15%
____ more than 25%
____ more than 15% but less than 20%
____ more than 20% but less than 25%

12. Approximately how many times have you failed to pay a bill since your husband's departure ? _____

If you have children, please complete the following section.

13. In which of the following areas have you obtained your children's cooperation?

____ make their bed
____ clean their room
____ help with dishes
____ take out garbage
____ mow the lawn
____ wash the car
____ N/A (children too young)

14. For each of the following items check the response most characteristic of your influence on the children's activities in school:

a. Grades have

greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.

b. Tardiness in school

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____; always ____.

c. Disrespect toward authority

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____; always ____.

d. Interest in school

greatly improved ____; somewhat improved ____; somewhat worsened ____; greatly worsened ____.

15. In each of the following check the work which characterizes your children's behavior in the home:

a. Talk back

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____; always ____.

b. Fight/argue with siblings

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____; always ____.

c. Refuse to obey orders

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

d. Disrespect parental authority

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

16. In each of the following categories check the appropriate response in reference to the difficulty you have experienced with your children since your husband's departure:

a. Running away from home

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

b. Telling lies

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

c. Involvement with the legal authorities

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

d. Acting out sexually

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

e. Other--specify

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; often ____;
very frequently ____.

17. For each of the following items check the response which most usually reflects your present pattern of discipline:

a. Punish severely

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

b. Disregard behavior to avoid disciplining children

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

c. Consult others on discipline problems

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

d. Worry about the quality of discipline you administer

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

e. Discipline consistently and help children to understand why

never ____; rarely ____; sometimes ____; usually ____;
always ____.

APPENDIX E

REMINDER LETTER

Dear Mrs. _____:

Our research project is now well under way and time is very important to us. We would greatly appreciate it if you would contribute to our work by completing the questionnaire sent to you as soon as possible, and return it to us. Thank you again for your cooperation in participating in our study.

Sincerely,

JACKSON D. PURCELL
CPT, MSC
Social Work Officer

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